

## CALIFORNIA CONSERVATION CORPS

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*Sponsored by Napa-Solano Building Trades Council***CCC CORPSMEMBERS COMPLETE PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**

Nineteen members of the California Conservation Corps have graduated from a local building trades training program, many of them more than doubling their CCC salaries in their new union jobs.

Sponsored by the Napa-Solano Building Trades Council with assistance from the state Employment Development Department, the eight-week pre-apprenticeship training course gave the corpsmembers both textbook and hands-on learning in electrical, plumbing, masonry and drywall skills, blueprint reading and more. On a larger scale, the intensive program offered the young men and women an overview of the building trades and the career opportunities available to them.

Those selected for the program, which took place at the CCC's Mare Island facility, had to be corpsmembers in good standing, nearing their one-year graduation, with a high school diploma or GED. Corpsmembers from throughout the state were eligible, with some coming from as far as San Diego and Ventura counties to attend.

Harry Bash, a former Napa High School and Vintage High School teacher and member of the carpenter's trade for 32 years, provided the instruction.

"Some of these corpsmembers had never hit a nail with a hammer before this class," Bash said. "But they learned what they could achieve and how to go about achieving it," Bash said.

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Corpsmembers received weekly evaluations and by the program's end, most were indentured into a union -- carpenters, painters or laborers union. One young man is now earning \$17.80/hour, plus benefits, as a carpenter's apprentice -- a large jump from his CCC minimum wage paycheck.

At the program's recent graduation, state CCC director Wes Pratt spoke and indicated his interest in developing similar programs in other parts of the state, to help young people transition into careers after the CCC.

"Our corpsmembers have benefited tremendously from this partnership with the Building Trades Council and the Employment Development Department," Pratt said. "Their skill sets have increased, their self-esteem enhanced and they are better prepared for future careers in construction as well."

Pratt noted that the program would not have come to fruition without the support and leadership of Lou Franchimon, business manager for the Building Trades Council.

The California Conservation Corps is a state agency that employs young men and women, ages 18 to 23, for a year of natural resource work, emergency response and public service. More information on the CCC is available on the Corps' Web site: [www.ccc.ca.gov](http://www.ccc.ca.gov).

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